



Restrictive Interventions and Reasonable Force Policy

Approved by:
B.Suddhi

Date: July 2026

Last reviewed on: July 2026

Next review due by: July 2027

Signed by:

Headteacher

Date: July 2026

Chair of governors

Date: July 2026

Statement of Intent

This policy forms part of the school's wider behaviour and inclusion framework and operates in conjunction with the Behaviour Policy. The principles, expectations and approaches outlined within both policies are intended to be consistent and mutually reinforced.

The Behaviour Policy sets out the school's proactive and preventative approaches to promoting positive behaviour, relationships and regulation. This policy provides additional guidance regarding restrictive interventions, including the lawful use of reasonable force and seclusion where absolutely necessary.

Together, these policies support the school's commitment to:

- creating a safe, respectful and inclusive environment
- promoting positive relationships and emotional wellbeing
- reducing the need for restrictive interventions through prevention and de-escalation
- ensuring responses to behaviour are proportionate, relational and legally compliant

1. Purpose and Scope

This policy sets out the school's approach to restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force and seclusion, in line with:

- Restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force, in schools (effective from 1 April 2026)
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Equality Act 2010
- Children Act 1989
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Schools (Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint) (No. 2) (England) Regulations 2025
- SEND Code of Practice

The school is committed to creating a safe, respectful, inclusive and supportive environment in which all pupils can learn and thrive. Restrictive interventions will only ever be used as a last resort, for the shortest possible time, and in a way that is proportionate, lawful, reasonable and necessary.

This policy applies to:

- All pupils
- All school activities, including off-site visits and transport where staff are responsible for pupils
- All members of staff

2. Principles

The school will:

- Promote positive behaviour through inclusive and proactive approaches
- Minimise the need for restrictive interventions through prevention and de-escalation
- Protect the dignity, welfare and human rights of pupils
- Use restrictive interventions only where absolutely necessary
- Ensure interventions are proportionate to the risk presented
- Avoid interventions that are punitive, degrading or intentionally painful
- Ensure all staff understand their legal responsibilities
- Record, report and review incidents appropriately
- Work collaboratively with parents, carers and external agencies
- Provide additional support and reasonable adjustments for pupils with SEND and disabilities

3. Definitions

3.1 Restrictive Intervention

A restrictive intervention is any act that restricts a pupil's movement, liberty or freedom to act independently.

Restrictive interventions may include:

- Physical restraint
- Physical guidance
- Blocking a pupil's path

- Escorting or leading a pupil
- Removing a pupil from a space
- Seclusion
- Restricting access to items or environments where necessary for safety

3.2 Reasonable Force

Reasonable force refers to the force used by staff that is proportionate, necessary and appropriate in the circumstances to prevent harm or serious disruption.

Reasonable force may be used to:

- Prevent a pupil from injuring themselves or others
- Prevent serious damage to property
- Prevent serious disorder
- Remove a pupil from a classroom or area where they are refusing to follow an instruction and their behaviour is seriously disrupting others
- Prevent a pupil from leaving a supervised area where this would place them or others at risk

The degree of force used must always be the minimum necessary and applied for the shortest possible time.

3.3 Seclusion

Seclusion refers to the supervised confinement and isolation of a pupil away from others, where the pupil is prevented from leaving.

Seclusion must only be used where necessary to prevent immediate harm and where no less restrictive option is available.

The use of locked rooms or spaces for seclusion is prohibited unless explicitly authorised under exceptional circumstances and compliant with legal requirements.

4. Legal Framework

The school recognises its duties under:

Human Rights Act 1998

The school will ensure interventions respect pupils' rights to:

- Safety
- Dignity
- Freedom from degrading treatment
- Private and family life
- Education

Equality Act 2010

The school recognises its duty to:

- Avoid discrimination
- Make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils
- Consider the impact of disability, neurodiversity, trauma and communication needs
- Ensure restrictive interventions are not used disproportionately against pupils with protected characteristics

Safeguarding Duties

All restrictive interventions will be considered within the school's safeguarding framework.

Any concern regarding excessive force, inappropriate restraint or potential harm must be reported immediately in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

5. Preventative and Whole-School Approaches

The school's primary approach is prevention.

5.1 Whole-School Measures

The school will:

- Maintain a positive, inclusive and predictable learning environment
- Embed the principles of the **5 to Thrive** approach to support emotional regulation, attachment, wellbeing and positive relationships across the school community. Staff will use the five key elements — **Talk, Play, Relax, Engage and Respond** — in developmentally appropriate ways to strengthen pupil relationships, support co-regulation and reduce escalation
- Use consistent behaviour expectations and routines
- Ensure classrooms and communal areas support emotional regulation and safety
- Promote emotionally available and respectful staff-pupil relationships
- Use restorative and relational approaches where appropriate
- Train staff in:
 - De-escalation
 - Trauma-informed practice
 - SEND awareness
 - Communication strategies
 - Positive behaviour support
 - Safe restrictive intervention techniques
- Analyse data relating to behaviour incidents and restrictive interventions
- Identify patterns, trends and disproportionality
- Implement improvement plans where concerns arise

The school recognises that relational and attachment-aware approaches can significantly reduce the need for restrictive interventions. Individual support strategies may therefore incorporate principles from the 5 to Thrive model, particularly for pupils who experience dysregulation, trauma, anxiety or communication difficulties.

5.2 Individual Approaches

The school may implement tailored approaches including:

- Behaviour support plans
- Risk assessments
- Pastoral support plans
- Reasonable adjustments
- Sensory and regulation strategies
- Safe spaces or time-out arrangements
- Individual communication approaches
- Multi-agency support
- Reintegration planning

Parents and carers will be involved wherever possible in developing support plans.

6. De-escalation

Staff must use de-escalation strategies before considering restrictive intervention unless there is an immediate risk of harm.

Strategies may include:

- Calm and respectful communication
- Use of appropriate tone and body language
- Offering reassurance
- Providing processing time
- Redirecting attention
- Offering choices
- Reducing demands
- Removing triggers or audience attention
- Allowing movement or sensory breaks
- Using agreed regulation strategies
- Seeking support from trained colleagues

Staff should consider the pupil's:

- Age
- Understanding
- Communication needs
- Disability
- Mental health
- Trauma history
- Cultural background
- Known triggers

7. Authorised Staff

All school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force where necessary.

The Headteacher may also identify specific staff to receive additional training in restrictive intervention.

The school will ensure:

- Staff receive appropriate training and refresher training
- Staff understand this policy and relevant legislation
- Staff know how to seek support during incidents
- Staff understand recording and reporting requirements

Supply staff and temporary staff will receive relevant information and guidance.

8. Circumstances Where Restrictive Intervention May Be Used

Restrictive intervention may only be used where:

- There is an immediate risk of harm to the pupil or others
- Serious damage to property is likely

- Serious disruption places safety or learning at significant risk
- Other strategies have failed or are not appropriate in the circumstances

Examples may include:

- Fighting or assault
- Attempting to run into danger
- Throwing dangerous objects
- Self-injurious behaviour
- Serious destruction of property creating risk
- Behaviour creating significant safety concerns

Restrictive intervention must never be used:

- As a punishment
- To cause pain, humiliation or distress
- Because staff are frustrated or angry
- To enforce compliance where no significant risk exists
- As a substitute for effective behaviour support

9. Use of Physical Intervention

Where physical intervention is necessary:

- The least restrictive option must be used
- The intervention must be proportionate to the risk
- Force must cease as soon as the risk reduces
- Staff should continue verbal de-escalation throughout
- Staff must monitor the pupil's physical and emotional wellbeing
- Staff must stop immediately if the intervention causes distress beyond what is unavoidable

The following practices are prohibited except in life-threatening emergencies where no alternative exists:

- Deliberately painful holds
- Restricting breathing or obstructing airways
- Holding a pupil face down
- Pressure on the neck, chest or abdomen
- Use of restraint as punishment
- Deprivation of basic needs

Where possible, another adult should witness restrictive interventions.

10. Seclusion

Seclusion must only be used:

- As a last resort
- To prevent immediate harm
- For the shortest possible duration
- Under continuous supervision

The school will ensure:

- The pupil's physical safety and emotional wellbeing are monitored

- The environment is safe and appropriate
- The pupil has access to communication where appropriate
- The pupil is released as soon as risk reduces

Seclusion must not be used:

- As a punishment
- For staff convenience
- For prolonged periods
- Without supervision

Any use of seclusion must be recorded and reported in line with statutory requirements.

11. Pupils with SEND and Disabilities

The school recognises that some pupils with SEND or disabilities may require additional support to regulate emotions and behaviour.

The school will:

- Make reasonable adjustments
- Consider sensory, communication and emotional needs
- Use proactive support strategies
- Avoid discriminatory practices
- Review whether interventions are proportionate and appropriate
- Involve parents and professionals in planning support

The school will monitor data to identify any disproportionate use of restrictive intervention involving pupils with SEND or protected characteristics.

12. Recording and Reporting

All incidents involving restrictive intervention or seclusion must be recorded as soon as possible and before the end of the working day wherever practicable.

Records should include:

- Date, time and location
- Names of staff and pupils involved
- Antecedents and triggers
- De-escalation strategies attempted
- Nature of the risk presented
- Type of intervention used
- Duration of intervention
- Any injuries or distress
- Outcome of the incident
- Follow-up actions taken
- Whether parents/carers were informed

Records will be:

- Stored securely
- Reviewed by senior leaders
- Analysed for patterns and trends

- Used to inform support planning and staff development

Informing Parents and Carers

Parents/carers will normally be informed on the same day where:

- Reasonable force has been used
- Seclusion has occurred
- Injury or significant distress has occurred

The school will communicate factually, sensitively and transparently.

13. Post-Incident Support and Debrief

Following an incident, the school will:

- Check the welfare of the pupil and staff involved
- Provide first aid or medical attention if required
- Offer emotional support
- Debrief staff and pupils where appropriate
- Review triggers and preventative strategies
- Consider whether support plans require amendment
- Reflect on lessons learned

Debrief discussions should be restorative and supportive rather than punitive.

14. Complaints and Concerns

Parents/carers or pupils who have concerns about the use of restrictive intervention may raise concerns through the school's complaints procedure.

Allegations relating to inappropriate force or misconduct will be investigated promptly and fairly in accordance with safeguarding and disciplinary procedures.

15. Monitoring, Review and Governance

The Headteacher and Governing Board will monitor:

- Frequency and nature of restrictive interventions
- Patterns relating to specific groups of pupils
- Staff training compliance
- Effectiveness of preventative approaches
- Any safeguarding concerns

The Governing Board will review this policy annually or sooner if legislation or guidance changes.

16. Staff Training

The school will provide appropriate training to relevant staff covering:

- Legal framework
- Positive behaviour support
- Trauma-informed approaches
- De-escalation techniques
- SEND and communication needs

- Safe restrictive intervention techniques
- Recording and reporting procedures
- Safeguarding considerations

Training records will be maintained.

17. Linked Policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- SEND Policy
- Equality and Accessibility Policies
- Health and Safety Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Complaints Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy

Appendix A – Example De-escalation Strategies

- Calm verbal reassurance
- Use of visual supports
- Movement breaks
- Sensory regulation strategies
- Offering choices
- Time and space
- Distraction and redirection
- Reducing sensory stimuli
- Planned exit or safe space
- Use of trusted adults

Appendix B – Example Restrictive Intervention Record Form

Pupil Details

- Name:
- Date of Birth:
- Year Group:

Incident Details

- Date:
- Time:
- Location:
- Staff involved:
- Witnesses:

Antecedents

- What happened before the incident?

Risk Presented

- What immediate risk was identified?

De-escalation Strategies Used

- What strategies were attempted?

Restrictive Intervention Used

- Type of intervention:
- Duration:

Outcome

- Injuries sustained:
- Medical attention required:
- Pupil response:
- Staff response:

Follow-Up Actions

- Parent informed:
- Debrief completed:
- Support plan reviewed:
- Safeguarding referral required:

Completed By

- Name:
- Signature:
- Date:

Appendix C – Guidance for Staff

Staff should always:

- Stay calm
- Use clear and respectful communication
- Seek support early
- Prioritise safety and dignity
- Use the least restrictive option
- Record incidents accurately
- Reflect on preventative strategies

Staff should never:

- Use force to punish
- Use degrading language
- Escalate conflict unnecessarily
- Ignore safeguarding concerns
- Use unauthorised or unsafe techniques

Equality Impact Statement

The school has considered its duties under the Equality Act 2010 in developing this policy and will monitor implementation to ensure that no group is unfairly disadvantaged.